



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE  
McDOWELL SONORAN PRESEVE COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**October 1, 2015**

**Florence Ely Nelson Desert Park  
8950 E. Pinnacle Peak Road  
Scottsdale, AZ 85255**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Jim Heitel, Chairman  
Robert Frost, Vice Chairman  
Mike Milillo, Commissioner  
Jace McKeighan (arrived 5:07p.m.)  
Fred Klein, Commissioner  
Steve Dodd, Commissioner

**ABSENT:** Con Englehorn, Commissioner

**STAFF:** Kroy Ekblaw  
Scott Hamilton  
Liz Hildenbrand  
Yvonne Massman  
Lee Guillory  
Luis Santaella

**GUESTS:** Mike Nolan  
Aaron Bolin  
John Holmes

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Heitel called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Members present as noted above.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT** (Discussion begins at 5:06; approximately 1 minute into the meeting)

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

Chair Heitel thanked Commissioner Klein for his years of commitment to the Commission and the Preserve.

Mr. Ekblaw thanked Commissioner Klein on behalf of staff for his years of service on the Commission and for his passion and his long term vision of sustainability for the Preserve. He presented Commissioner Klein with a plaque commemorating his service.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** (Discussion begins at 5:08; approximately 3 minutes into the meeting)

Approval of the Regular Meeting minutes of September 3, 2015

**VICE-CHAIR FROST MOVED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 3, 2015 MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER MCKEIGHAN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). COMMISSIONER ENGLEHORN WAS ABSENT.**

**5. MCDOWELL SONORAN CONSERVANCY UPDATE** (Discussion begins at 5:09; approximately 4 minutes into the meeting)

Mr. Nolan noted that the Preserve Day event is scheduled for October 18th and will include an exhibit and programming by the Salt River-Pima Maricopa Indian Community.

The Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve Research Symposium is scheduled for Saturday, October 24th at Scottsdale Community College and will include oral presentations by scientists, four Valley leaders talking about conservation issues, and keynote speaker Virginia Korte.

Pathfinders will move into a full schedule in October. The patrol schedule goes up on October 1st. The Steward kickoff had 150 attendees. The second new Steward orientation is scheduled for October 10th and is sold out.

Mr. Nolan noted that the White Tanks Conservancy will be auditing the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy in hopes of modeling their program.

Mr. Nolan thanked Commissioner Klein for his service on the Commission and his work with the Conservancy.

**6. POLICE REQUEST FOR ORDINANCE UPDATE RELATED TO ANIMALS**  
(Discussion begins at 5:13; approximately 8 minutes into the meeting)

Officer Bolin discussed his background and involvement with patrolling the Preserve. He reiterated information provided to the Commission in September regarding a recent incident with a resident allowing his horses to roam in the Preserve. The individual was prosecuted under City Code section 23-12(19) and the judge in the case determined that the language about "release" and the definition of "any animal" were unclear and the case was dismissed. Officer Bolin reviewed the ordinance as it has been amended, including the suggestions made by Commission members during the September MSPC meeting.

Commissioners were given the opportunity to make comments and suggest changes. Mr. Ekblaw confirmed that smooth wire fencing surrounds the gooseneck area. Mr. Hamilton noted that additional signs prohibiting livestock grazing have been posted in the area.

**VICE-CHAIR FROST MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL THAT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO ORDINANCE SECTION 2117 PROHIBITING LIVESTOCK PASTURING BE APPROVED. COMMISSIONER MILILLO SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). COMMISSIONER ENGLEHORN WAS ABSENT.**

**7. IDEAS FOR ENDOWMENT CONCEPT** (Discussion begins at 5:23; approximately 18 minutes into the meeting)

Mr. Ekblaw presented the draft Estimated Preserve Tax Cash Flows information, noting that all options assume \$37 million for land acquisition in 2016 and \$16 million for improvements and that all figures are subject to change.

Ms. Guillory explained the events that caused the estimated endowment balance to increase by approximately \$26 million. She noted that the 2014/15 actual numbers are now available and generated approximately \$4.4 million of additional cash; some bonds that were outstanding were refinanced, generating approximately \$6.7 in future cash flow savings; the next bond issuance for land acquisition has been reduced to \$20 million and the \$17 million cash balance can be used, which would save approximately \$10 million in interest; and the sales tax audit group increased future sales tax collections to generate an additional \$4.5 million. Because of these changes there is an estimated additional interest income of approximately \$1 million.

Discussion ensued regarding City Council's concerns; the various scenarios including how the removal of the food tax would affect the numbers; clarifying information provided on the draft document; and the importance of establishing an endowment to protect Preserve operation and maintenance funds into the future. Ms. Guillory noted that the City has approximately \$378 million in bonds outstanding, including \$194 million that are callable and that all bonds mature in July 2034.

John Holmes expressed concerns about the legal aspect of the endowment and stressed the importance of outlining specific items the O & M will cover, including trail assessments within the Preserve.

## **8. MARICOPA TRAIL UPDATE**

Mr. Hamilton noted that the Maricopa Trail is a 242-mile multi-use trail connecting major open spaces around the Phoenix Metro area. The trail was started in 1997 and is projected for completion in 2016. The Scottsdale portion of the trail will include existing paths and trails. Existing signs will be retrofitted with the Maricopa Trail logo.

Commission members were given the opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Hamilton explained that Fountain Hills is not part of the trail connection at this time, due to difficulties with route connections south of the community.

## **9. STAFF REPORTS**

- Preserve Day 2015

Ms. Hildenbrand shared the news release announcing Preserve Month, noting that a news release announcing Preserve Day will be put out on October 12th. She said that the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau included Preserve Day as part of their social media release and Preserve Month and Preserve Day were mentioned in the October Parks and Recreation newsletter.

Preserve Day events will be held at Brown's Ranch beginning at 8:00 a.m., with activities continuing throughout the day.

- Land Acquisition Update

Mr. Ekblaw noted that the City is continuing discussions with the State Land Department on their zoning case. Feedback from the State Land Department is projected to be received by early November, which could result in a Planning Commission hearing being scheduled by the first of the year, City Council hearing in January or February, and auction in February or March.

- Deer Collaring Update

Mr. Hamilton announced that City Council approved the agreement allowing the City to purchase radio tracking collars and give them to the Game and Fish Department.

The City was awarded \$56,000 in Salt-River Pima Maricopa Community Gaming Grants. City Council will consider official acceptance of the funds on October 6th.

- Desert Discovery Center

Mr. Ekblaw said that City Council gave direction to staff to move forward with negotiations with Desert Discovery Center Scottsdale, Inc. If the contract is approved, the public process will follow in 2016.

Chair Heitel requested that a public notice sign announcing that the project is under consideration be put up at the Gateway as soon as possible.

## **10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Klein stressed the importance of educating the community about the Preserve and its benefits so that in the future if the City faces budgetary problems, protection of the Preserve will be supported by the majority of Scottsdale's citizens.

Commissioner Milillo agreed with Commissioner Klein's comments, noting that promotion of the Preserve is specifically outlined in the City's General Plan.

Chair Heitel suggested that discussion about keeping promotion of the Preserve in the forefront be agendaized for one of the next couple of meetings.

## **11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Possible November agenda items include:

- Endowment Concept and Conditions Follow-up
- Cultural Resources Master Plan Update
- DDC Process Update
- Fraesfield/Granite Update of Concept Planning

Other Future Items:

- Earmarking Funds from Commercial Outfitters
- Drones
- Dogs in the Preserve
- Priorities for Promotion Plan
- Land Acquisition Update

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.